

## NF - Neonatal Fever

### NF-C            **COMPLICATIONS**

**OUTCOME:** The parent/family will understand the potential complications of neonatal fever.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that neonatal fever may be the result of bacterial infection and that this may result in death, neurologic sequella, or physical deformity, as appropriate.
2. Discuss the need to have a neonate with fever evaluated immediately to decrease the risk of these complications.

### NF-DP            **DISEASE PROCESS**

**OUTCOME:** The parent/family will understand the possible etiologies of neonatal fever and why neonatal fever is so potentially devastating.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that in the first 60 days of life an infant's immune system is not as competent at fighting infection as it is later in life. Explain that neonates are often unable to contain an infection in a certain body system and that the infection can become overwhelming and wide-spread in a very short period of time.
2. Explain that an infection, especially a bacterial infection can be fatal to a neonate.
3. Explain that fever can be a signal of many different things, among them, infections with various bacteria or viruses.
4. Discuss the need to have a neonate with fever evaluated immediately to decrease the risk of complications from neonatal infection.

### NF-EQ            **EQUIPMENT**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will have an understanding and demonstrate (when appropriate) the proper use and care of equipment.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Discuss the indications for and benefits of the prescribed medical equipment.
2. Discuss types and features of the medical equipment as appropriate.
3. Discuss and/or demonstrate proper use, care, and cleaning of medical equipment.
4. Participate in a return demonstration by the patient/family.
5. Discuss signs of equipment malfunction and proper action in case of malfunction as appropriate.

6. Discuss proper disposal of associated medical supplies.
7. For inpatients, explain that the various alarms are to alert the medical personnel of the patient's status and/or the function of the equipment.
8. Emphasize the importance of not tampering with any medical device.

**NF-FU FOLLOW-UP**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the importance of follow-up in the treatment of neonatal fever.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that it is especially important to follow-up neonatal fever if the fever has been treated by outpatient management and that this follow-up should continue until the physician or provider has declared that the risk from the fever has past.
2. Explain that follow-up of neonatal fever that has been treated as an inpatient is important to assure that the infant has been fully treated and is recovering from the disease process that caused the fever.
3. Explain the process for making follow-up appointments and assist the parent/family as necessary in obtaining follow-up care.

**NF-L LITERATURE**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will receive literature about neonatal fever.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Provide patient/family with literature on neonatal fever.
2. Discuss the content of the literature.

**NF-M MEDICATIONS**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the purpose, proper use and expected outcomes of prescribed drug therapy.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Describe the name, strength, purpose, dosing directions, and storage of the medication.
2. Explain that because bacterial infections in neonates can be fatal extra caution is in order and many providers will give antibiotics before the causative agent has been identified. This is done to protect the neonate (with a incompletely developed immune system) from the potentially devastating consequences of bacterial infection.
3. Discuss the risks, benefits, and common or important side effects of the medication and follow up as appropriate.

4. Discuss any significant drug/drug, drug/food, and alcohol interactions, as appropriate.
5. Discuss the importance of keeping a list of all current prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, traditional remedies, and supplements. Encourage the patient to bring this list and pill bottles to appointments for medication reconciliation.

**NF-P PREVENTION**

**OUTCOME:** The parent/family will understand that neonatal fever can often be prevented and the measures to take to prevent the neonate from becoming infected.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that because an infant in the first 60 days of life has a less competent immune system it is important to protect him/her from germs (bacteria/viruses).
2. Explain that bacteria and viruses are usually passed from one human to another.
3. Explain that it is important to keep the neonate out of public places for the first 60 days of life to decrease his/her exposure to other humans. (Public places or any place one can reasonably anticipate seeing more than 4 or 5 people, e.g., such as grocery stores, department stores, ball games, school functions, restaurants.)
4. Explain that hand washing at home is an effective way to prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses in the home.
5. Explain that family members who become ill should avoid contact with the neonate if at all possible. (The possible exception to this being the nursing mother who is providing for the infant, antibodies to her illness through breastmilk.)
6. Explain that breastfeeding improves the neonates immune system by the passing of antibodies to the infant in the mother's milk.

**NF-TE TESTS**

**OUTCOME:** The parent/family will understand that testing is necessary to determine the etiology of the fever. They will also have an understanding of the potential adverse outcomes of the tests to be performed or the risks of not performing the recommended tests.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Discuss with the parent/family the test(s) to be performed. Discuss the procedure for performing the test(s) in terms that can be understood by the parent/family.
2. Explain the benefit of the test as well as the risk(s) involved in performing the test(s). Explain the risk(s) associated with not performing the recommended test(s).

3. Explain that obtaining the results of some tests routinely performed to determine the etiology of neonatal fever (cultures of various body fluids) can take several days.